



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND HOMES FOR HILLSBOROUGH JOIN FORCES IN SWEAT EQUITY WORKDAY CELEBRATING NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH**

RIVERVIEW, FL, June 16, 2004 — Today's Sweat Equity Workday Celebration in Riverview, Florida brought together volunteers, including employees of USDA Rural Development and Homes for Hillsborough, Inc., along with new homeowners to paint the home exterior of Douglas and Lucila Kalbach. The Kalbachs are currently building their first home, and are participating in the USDA funded Mutual Self-Help Housing Program in Hillsborough County.

In celebration of National Homeownership Month, USDA Rural Development and grantee partner, Homes for Hillsborough, Inc., joined forces at Summerview Oaks subdivision to help the Kalbachs realize the American Dream of homeownership. But the Kalbachs are not alone in "getting a new lease on life," as all 72 homes in the Summerview Oaks subdivision have been built through Rural Development's Self-Help Program.

With assistance from Rural Development, Homes for Hillsborough, a not-for-profit homebuilder that operates the USDA funded mutual self-help housing program in Hillsborough County, has helped more than 100 families enjoy homeownership. And with 33 additional homes under construction, an increasing number of families will be reaping the benefits of safe, sanitary and affordable housing. Rural Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have helped millions of rural individuals and families purchase a home of their own and realize their dreams. President George W. Bush has proclaimed June as National Homeownership Month, recognizing that owning a home helps give families security and a sense of pride, and an important part of the American way of life.

The USDA Rural Development Mutual Self-Help Housing Program provides homeownership opportunities to low-income individuals in rural communities, exchanging the opportunity to work for the down payment, as well as direct home loans and subsidies based on income and family size. USDA Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities and is the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers financial and technical assistance through Rural Housing Programs, Rural Business-Cooperative Programs and Rural Utilities Programs. Further information on USDA Rural Development can be obtained by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl>

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